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Spring 2014

Secretary Martin brings electronic notarization to the Natural State

Beginning in April, the Secretary of State's office is implementing electronic notarization in Arkansas, allowing notaries in good standing to apply for authorization to e-notarize.

"This project will build a more convenient atmosphere for e-commerce in Arkansas," Secretary Martin said. "Several Arkansas counties have begun or are moving toward electronic recording of real estate, and we anticipate those transactions as well as financial institutions being significant users of this service."

Bail bonds companies will also benefit, he said. "We have talked with bail bonding companies that expect to save hundreds of dollars monthly on paper costs, by adopting e-notarization."

Individuals who wish to become e-notaries must currently be in good standing as a commissioned Arkansas notary public. Training is required to become an e-notary; an application form is available on the e-notary page of the Secretary of State's website, bit.ly/Ark_eNotary.

"I am very pleased that implementing e-notarization in Arkansas will not burden taxpayers with increased costs," Martin said. "That was my top priority for this project: low costs for both the state and the notary."

E-notaries will select from a list of approved solution providers, based on their needs and uses for e-notarizations.

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The Secretary's Minute

'Tis the season for business expos and franchise tax deadlines

Mark Martin

ARKANSAS SECRETARY OF STATE

Welcome to Arkansas, springtime. This past winter brought several snow days, which slowed the economy, but as the days warm, business should increase. I look forward to seeing great commercial activity in Arkansas this spring and summer.

We have almost reached May, and the Arkansas business community knows what that means: franchise taxes! The deadline is Thursday, May 1, so be sure to file your annual report and pay franchise taxes now to avoid delinquency.

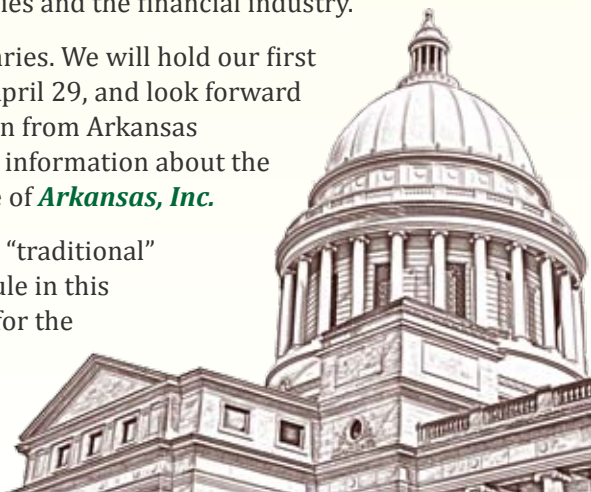
During the last four months of 2013, we held a one-time amnesty season for penalties and interest on delinquent franchise taxes. More than 2,000 businesses returned to good standing by paying more than \$768,000 in late franchise taxes, without being charged interest. We are very pleased with this response and hope it will inspire more businesses to pay overdue taxes.

I'm very pleased to announce a new option for notaries public. Arkansas notaries in good standing can apply for a commission enhancement authorizing them to electronically notarize documents. This will be especially useful for businesses that conduct extensive notarizations, including title closing companies and the financial industry.

Training is required for e-notaries. We will hold our first training session on Tuesday, April 29, and look forward to feedback on this new option from Arkansas businesses. You can find more information about the e-notary program in this issue of *Arkansas, Inc.*

Training is also continuing for "traditional" notaries. Check out the schedule in this newsletter or on our website for the appropriate training date.

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Notary Public roadshow now underway

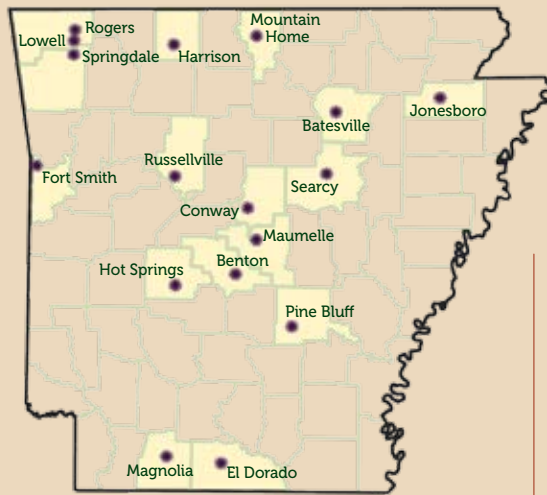
Arkansas Secretary of State Mark Martin is proud to continue offering informational sessions to the state's notaries public.

The 90-minute seminars are geared toward both prospective and current notaries public in Arkansas. The Secretary of State encourages notaries to attend to gain important information about the ever-changing Arkansas notary public laws and regulations.

Pre-registration is required; simply visit www.sos.arkansas.gov/bcs. For more information, e-mail danielle.fusco@sos.arkansas.gov, or call (501) 682-5286 or toll free at (888)233-0325.

Sessions scheduled for 2014:

March	13 — Hot Springs	July
25 — Batesville	15 — Conway	9 — Jonesboro
April	22 — Pine Bluff	15 — El Dorado
22 — Searcy	June	16 — Magnolia
24 — Maumelle	11 — Harrison	31 — Russellville
May	12 — Mountain Home	August
5 — Springdale	16 — Springdale	27 — Fort Smith
6 — Rogers	17 — Lowell	
	26 — Benton	



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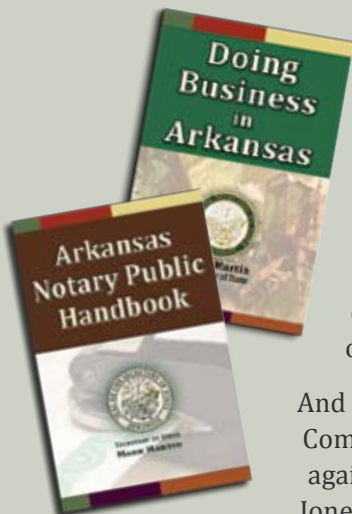
"That relationship will be a private arrangement between the notary and the provider," Martin said. "Some notaries who have a high volume of transactions may prefer one solution, while others may prefer a solution based on its low monthly subscription fees."

The solution provider list, application packet and training dates are available on the Secretary of State's website. E-notary training will be held monthly in Little Rock at no charge, but applicants must register in advance. The first training seminar is scheduled for April 29; full details are available at bit.ly/Ark_eNotary.

Questions may be addressed by e-mailing enotary@sos.arkansas.gov.

"This project has been underway for several months, as we have researched what is most convenient for Arkansas notaries public," Secretary Martin said. "I am confident that Arkansas is ready for this, and I anticipate seeing usage increase as notaries become more familiar with the potential benefits of being an e-notary."

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Other valuable resources include our updated publications, the **Arkansas Notary Public Handbook** and **Doing Business in Arkansas**.

Look for a printed version at your local courthouse or Chamber of Commerce, or download the digital version from our website.

And speaking of Chambers of Commerce, it is business expo time again. We have already been to the Jonesboro expo and Pulaski Technical

College Entrepreneurial Expo, and other upcoming events include Maumelle, Pine Bluff, Russellville, Rogers-Lowell and Conway. I hope you will attend these expos to see your local businesses, and I invite you to come by our table to talk to staff.

I attended several Chamber banquets over the winter and spring, and it was good to see many of you there. These banquets recognize the accomplishments of individual business leaders and companies providing goods and services in your communities, and it is encouraging to see such vital parts of Arkansas's fabric in action.

I am pleased to honor Petit Jean Meats as our Arkansas Icon business this quarter. The famous meat company was established in the 1920s and has survived the Great Depression, war shortages and three major fires. It has grown from a local meat market to a world famous, and truly iconic, purveyor of fine smoked meats.

Finally, remember that the deadline for nonprofit annual reports is approaching this summer. You can download the form and submit it now by going to our website at bit.ly/ARNonprofitReport.

To the entire Arkansas business community, thank you for your work to make Arkansas a great place to live and work.

Arkansas Business Icons: *Petit Jean Meats*

Petit Jean Meats is best known for producing the finest of Arkansas flavor, but the company traces its lineage back to Old World traditions.

Felix Schlosser trained as a butcher and meat packer in 1920s Germany. Seeking a better life, he left his homeland to join family living in the United States. He immigrated to Arkansas where he found work with Little Rock Packing Company. In 1926, he made his permanent home in Morrilton near his cousin, Mary Ruff.

Schlosser opened a small meat market with partner Ellis Bentley before assuming sole ownership two years later. A fire destroyed the small market, but on July 7, 1928, Schlosser reopened the business under the name Morrilton Meat Market and Sausage Factory. Soon, his cousin's two sons, Edward and Lonnie Ruff, who were 12 and 10 years old at the time, joined in, making home deliveries by bicycle after school and on weekends.

Ed came on board full-time in 1930, just in time to see the company add a wholesale line and become Morrilton Packing Company. By the time Lonnie joined full-time in 1932, the company had begun using the Petit Jean brand name. Morrilton Packing maintained both wholesale and retail operations until 1943, when the plant was remodeled and the retail arm closed.

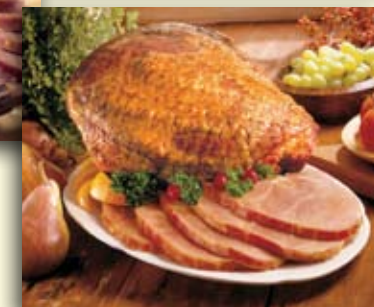
Federal contracts helped the company survive the Great Depression. Through the Emergency Relief Administration, the government purchased starving cattle in drought-stricken Western states and shipped them by rail to slaughter houses. Morrilton Packing received \$1 per head plus the hide and offal to butcher these cattle and chill the carcasses. The government also operated a boning and canning facility next door where meat was canned and distributed to needy families. Between 1935 and 1936, the company processed 15,000 head of cattle.

After World War II, the company faced one of its greatest challenges: a fire that completely destroyed its facilities. In a process that burned logs to smoke the meat, grease would sometimes drip onto the fire below and ignite. When smokehouse doors opened during one of these flame-ups, a major fire could erupt, just as it did for the catastrophic fire in 1946. Once again, the company rebuilt, taking just seven

months to reopen following Thanksgiving that same year.

As the company grew through the 1950's and 1960's, Ed and Lonnie became more

The company's products include bacon, sausage and, of course, its holiday favorite Petit Jean hams.



involved in the business. In 1968, they moved away from beef processing and turned exclusively to their now-famous pork products.

After the founder's death in 1968, the Ruff brothers managed the company together until Lonnie died in 1979. Ed's son, David Ruff, became plant manager in 1984. The company soon opened an ultra-modern manufacturing plant that expanded facilities by 75 percent and added sliced and vacuum-packed luncheon meats and other products in consumer-size packages.

When Ed died in 1990, David Ruff became chief executive officer and president. He continues in that role today, and has been joined in the company by his son Edward.

Today, the company is worlds removed from the small meat market Felix Schlosser began. Morrilton Packing no longer slaughters its own hogs, but purchases select, fresh pork cuts, trimmed to exacting specifications, from major packers. The smoking process has advanced, with rigorous controls on temperature and humidity. Internet sales now extend the company's reach as far away as Alaska and Hawaii. The company employs 70 people, and none of them make deliveries by bicycle.

However, so much has remained the same. Morrilton Packing Company is still owned by the same family, and it's the only privately owned processor of red meats left in Arkansas. Even though smoking occurs in climate-controlled smokehouses, the bacon and hams are still smoked for 18 hours with real burning hickory, not liquid smoke used by many other companies. The company ships across the country, but most customers still come from 75 miles around Morrilton.

While Felix Schlosser might have never dreamed his company would become the legend it is today, there is one thing he would recognize immediately — the taste.

"We still do things the old fashioned way," said David Ruff. "We don't use anything but the best quality meats and the best quality ingredients. So if you're looking for a great hot dog, a great ham, a great smoked sausage with great flavor, we've got it."

Note: This article is part of an ongoing series featuring iconic Arkansas businesses and business leaders.



Four generations have overseen the growth of Morrilton Packing Company since its beginnings in 1926.



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SECRETARY OF STATE
MARK MARTIN

Division of Business and Commercial Services
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1401 West Capitol Avenue
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201



Use a mobile QR app to scan
this code and order certificates
of good standing or search
entities *on the go!*

2014 Annual Franchise Tax *File Electronically Today*

Mark Martin
Arkansas Secretary of State

Deadline: May 1, 2014

Prepare and update your 2014 franchise tax report online at

www.sos.arkansas.gov

Arkansas Secretary of State

NOTE: Revoked entities continue to accrue franchise taxes annually until the business is dissolved/withdrawn with the Business & Commercial Services Division.

**Business and Commercial
Services Division**

Phone: 501.682.3409

Toll Free: 888.233.0325

Web: www.sos.arkansas.gov



***Contact Business and Commercial Services Division for forms to file by mail.**